



# Rare Plants of Louisiana



## *Linum macrocarpum* – Spring Hill flax Flax Family (Linaceae)

**Rarity Ranks:** SH/G2

**Range:** AL, FL, LA, MS

**Recognition:**

- 1) Tall slender plant, 2-5 ft tall, unbranched below inflorescence.
- 2) Most of stem leaves alternate, those on the lower stem opposite
- 3) Leaves narrowly elliptic, to 1" long.
- 4) Upper stem leaves gradually reduced in size
- 5) Flowers yellow in a terminal inflorescence
- 6) Fruits purple-pigmented, 3.4-3.8 mm long by 3.2-3.4 mm broad
- 7) Seeds 2.7 mm long or longer (fruit and seed size is critical in separating this species from *Linum floridanum*, which may occur at the same site)



Photo by Bruce Sorrie

**Flowering time:** May-July; **Fruit** - Fall

**Light Requirement:** Full sun

**Wetland Status:** FAC - similar likelihood of occurring in both wetlands and non-wetlands

**Habitats:** Longleaf pine flatwoods savannah and seepage bogs. Associates include pitcher plants (*Sarracenia* spp.), sundews (*Drosera* spp.), colic-root (*Aletris* spp.), butterworts (*Pinguicula* spp.), golden crest (*Lophiola aurea*), hatpins (*Eriocaulon* spp.), etc. There is presently little known about the ecology of Spring Hill Flax. Further field work across its range is necessary to gain a better understanding of this species.

**Threats:**

- 1) Conversion of habitat to intensively-managed pine plantations (chemical and mechanical site prep and overstocking)
- 2) Fire exclusion
- 3) Residential and commercial development
- 4) Drainage of habitat, either by ditching or by neglect that allows bogs/savannahs to fill in with trees/shrubs which take up more water and alter groundwater hydrology



**Beneficial management practices:**

- 1) Thinning, targeting for removal off-site species such as loblolly and slash pines
- 2) Burning, especially during growing season (April-June) for maximum control of woody plants – optimum fire return interval for savannahs and bogs is 1-3(-4) years
- 3) Refrain from creating drainage ditches and plowed fire lines (prepare fire lines by hand)



Specimen of Spring Hill flax representing the only record of this species from Louisiana. Specimen collected in 1975. Image provided by Dennis Bell, ULM Herbarium.

## References:

- NatureServe. 2006. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 6.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: February 5, 2007 ).
- Rogers, C.M. 1963. Yellow flowered species of *Linum* in eastern North America. *Brittonia* 15: 97-122.